WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1    1.    A system of providing billing information to a customer comprising:

2    circuitry to maintain usage information representative of cumulative customer

3    usage associated with a device over a time period; and

4    processes associated with a billing party for transmitting a print job through a data

5    communication network to a billing destination at a premises of the customer including

6    commands for printing an invoice amount based upon the usage information and pre-

7    established billing contract rules.

1    2.    The system of claim 1, wherein the device is coupled to the data communication

2    network and the processes associated with the billing party transmit a poll signal through the data

3    communication network to the circuitry to maintain the usage information,

4    wherein in response to a receipt of the poll signal, the circuitry to maintain the

5    usage information transmits data representative of the cumulative customer usage to the

6    processes associated with the billing party, and

7    wherein in response to receipt of the data at the processes associated with the

8    billing party, the billing party determines the invoice amount based upon the usage

9    information and the pre-established billing contract rules.

1    3.    The system of claim 1, wherein the billing destination is the device and the print

2    job includes commands interpretable at the device encoded therein for:

3    retrieving the usage information from a memory associated with the device; and

4     determining the invoice amount based upon the retrieved usage information and

5   the pre-established billing contract rules.

1    4.  The system of claim 1, wherein the circuitry to maintain the usage information is

2  in a controller external to the device and the billing destination is the external controller.

1    5.  The system of claim 1, wherein the circuitry to maintain the usage information

2  maintains information indicating usage for distinct accounts defined by the customer and

3  wherein the invoice amount indicates a total invoice amount and portions thereof applied to each

4  of the accounts.

1    6.  The system of claim 1, wherein the invoice amount is based upon a plurality of

2  combined cost components, at least one of the cost components being based upon the usage

3  information.

1    7.  The system of claim 1, wherein the billing party is one of an entity financing a

2  lease of the device to the customer and an entity which is contracted to service the device.

1    8.  The system of claim 1, wherein the billing party is an entity contracted to service

2  the device and the processes associated with the billing party determines a service schedule

3  based upon the usage information.

1    9.  A device at a premises of a customer, the device comprising:

2    circuitry to maintain usage information representative of cumulative customer

3    usage associated with the device over a time period; and

4    logic to determine an invoice amount based upon the usage information and pre-

5    established billing contract rules;

6    logic to generate a print job of a document including the invoice amount for

7    processing at a print engine associated with the device; and

8    logic to transmit data representative of the invoice amount to processes associated

9    with a billing party.

1    10.    The device of claim 9, wherein the logic to transmit data representative of the

2    invoice amount is configurable to transmit the invoice amount to processes associated with the

3    billing party through a data communication network.

1    11.    The device of claim 9, wherein the logic to transmit data representative of the

2    invoice amount is configurable to transmit the invoice amount to processes associated with the

3    billing party through a phone modem.

1    12.    The device of claim 9, wherein the device maintains information indicating usage

2    for distinct accounts defined by the customer and wherein the invoice amount indicates a total

3    invoice amount and portions thereof applied to each of the accounts.

1          13.     The device of claim 9, wherein the invoice amount is based upon a plurality of

2   combined cost components, at least one of the cost components being based upon the usage

3   information.

1          14.     The device of claim 9, wherein the billing party is one of an entity financing a

2   lease of the device to the customer and an entity which is contracted to service the device.

1          15.     The device of claim 9, wherein the billing party is an entity contracted to service

2   the device and the processes associated with the billing party determine a service schedule based

3   upon the usage information.

1          16.     A method of providing billing information to a customer, comprising:

2          maintaining usage information representative of cumulative customer usage

3   associated with a device over a time period; and

4          transmitting a print job from processes associated with a billing party through a

5   data communication network to a billing destination associated with the customer, the

6   print job including commands for printing an invoice amount based upon the usage

7   information and pre-established billing contract rules.

1          17.     The method of claim 16, wherein the device is coupled to the data communication

2   network, the method further including:

3          transmitting a poll signal from the processes associated with the billing party to

4          the device through the data communication network;

5      in response to a receipt of the poll signal, transmitting data representative of the

6      cumulative customer usage from the device to the processes associated with the billing

7      party; and

8      determining the invoice amount at the billing destination based upon the usage

9      information in response to receipt of the data at the processes associated with the billing

10      party, the billing party determining the invoice amount based upon the usage information

11      and the pre-established billing contract rules.

1      18.    The method of claim 16, wherein the billing destination is the device and the print

2      job includes commands interpretable at the device encoded therein for:

3      retrieving the usage information from a memory associated with the device; and

4      determining the invoice amount based upon the retrieved usage information and

5      the pre-established billing contract rules.

1      19.    The method of claim 16, the method further comprising maintaining information

2      indicating usage for distinct accounts defined by the customer and wherein the invoice amount

3      indicates a total invoice amount and portions thereof applied to each of the accounts.

1      20.    The method of claim 16, the method further comprising determining the invoice

2      amount based upon a combination of cost components, at least one of the cost components being

3      based upon the usage information.

1        21.    The method of claim 16, wherein the billing party is one of an entity financing a

2    lease of the device to the customer and an entity which is contracted to service the device.

1        22.    The method of claim 16, wherein the billing party is an entity contracted to

2    service the device and the processes associated with the billing party determines a service

3    schedule based upon the usage information.

1        23.    The method of claim 16, wherein the usage information is maintained at circuitry

2    in the device.

1        24.    The method of claim 16, wherein the usage information is maintained at a

2    controller which is external to the device.

1        25.    The method of claim 16, wherein the method further includes:

2        transmitting the usage information from one of the device and a controller

3    external to the device to a proxy server associated with the billing party;

4        receiving the usage information relating to one or more devices at the proxy

5    server; and

6        transmitting the usage information received at the proxy server to the processes

7    associated with the billing party.